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## TWO PORTRAITS BY STUART

**A** CERTAIN historic interest attaches to two portraits by Gilbert Stuart, recently acquired by the Museum, apart from their considerable intrinsic merit. They represent, as the long inscriptions in Spanish inform us, Don Josef de Jaudenes y Nebot, Spanish Minister to the United States, and Doña Matilde Stoughton de Jaudenes, his wife, and were painted in New York in 1794. They were evidently taken to Spain on the recall of the Minister and have remained in that country until purchased by the agent of Knoedler & Co. They now return to the city where they were painted. As the inscriptions further inform us, Don Josef was born in Valencia on the 25th of March, 1764, and was therefore thirty years of age when this portrait was taken, while his wife was only sixteen, having been born in New York on the 11th of January, 1778. Both canvases bear the signature and date, G. Stuart, R.A., Sept. 8, 1794. Rapidly and lightly as the pictures are painted, they can hardly have been done both in one day, and one is left to wonder what this precision of date may mean. Not impossibly September the 8th was the day of this early international marriage which the pictures were intended to commemorate. It should not be difficult, by a little research, to determine the question.

The pictures are very similar in general composition, the man facing to the observer's left, the woman to his right, the heads occupying almost exactly the same place on the canvas. The Spanish Minister is dressed in a dark blue coat lined and faced with scarlet, a scarlet waistcoat and breeches, and white stockings. The coat and waistcoat are profusely decorated with silver lace. He wears a dress sword, and his high cocked hat and gold-headed cane lie on the table at his side. The chair is upholstered in light blue, and the table cloth and obligatory curtain are green. The looped-up curtain shows a conventionally treated bookcase with a few books. The lady is all in white, with a high headdress

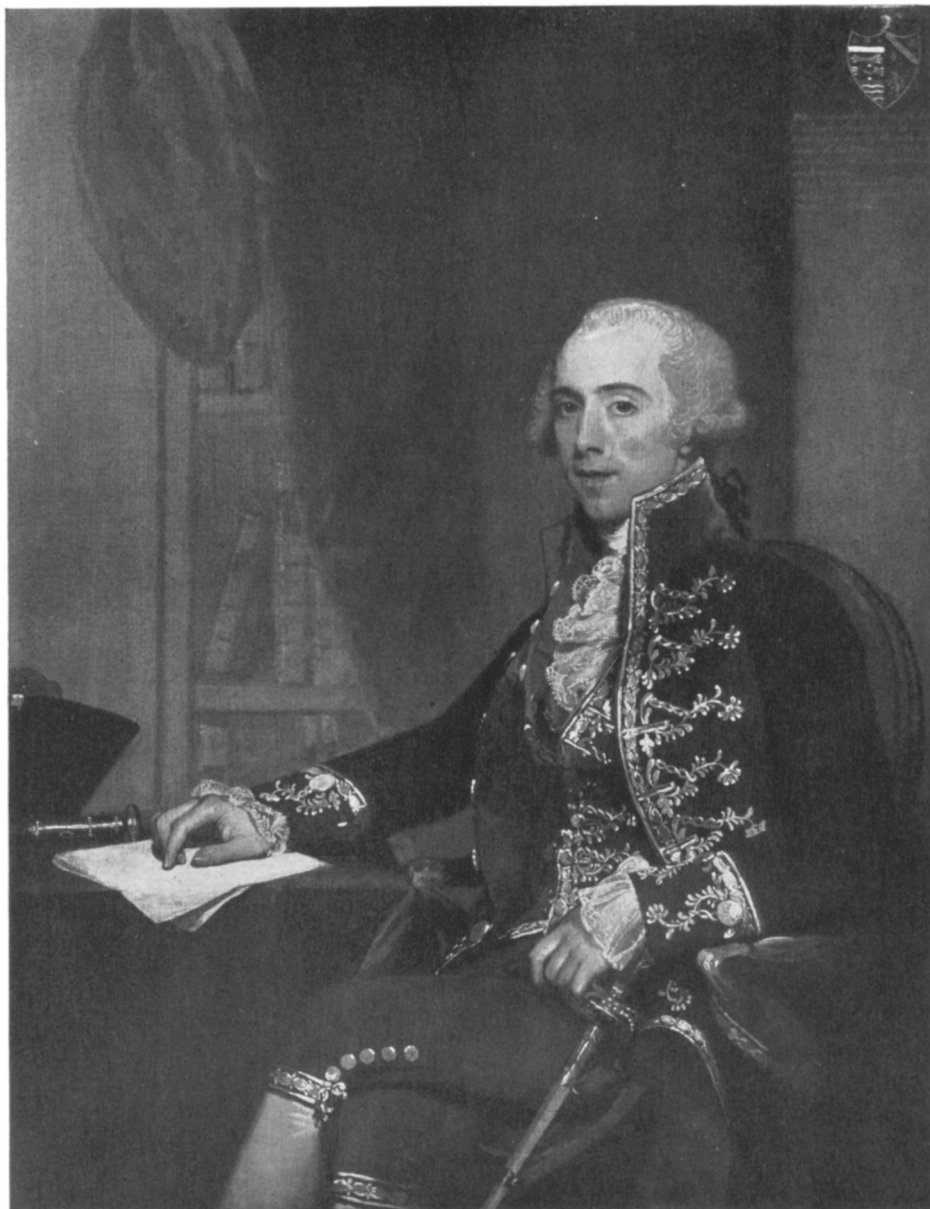
of feathers, and wears a profusion of pearls and jewels. The curtain is a brownish pink, the chair and tablecloth red, and in place of the bookcase there is a glimpse of blue and pink sky.

Stuart was thirty-nine when he painted these pictures, and had been two years returned to this country. Some of his later work was to be broader, softer, with a vaporous quality absent here, but nothing he ever did is cleverer in its way, and portraits by him in which so much attention is given to the costume are rare. The portrait of the lady is the more agreeable of the two. The high headdress gives an apparent reason for the placing of the head low on the canvas, which was a habit with the artist, and the gray whites and sharply touched jewels have been softened by time into an agreeable tone. Even a hundred years have not availed to mellow the blue and vermilion of the male portrait, which is still somewhat shrill in color, while the position of the head, probably painted first on a blank canvas, has forced the painter to a reduction of scale in the figure which makes it rather absurdly tiny. In sheer economy of means, and ease and freedom of touch both portraits are astonishing. The pearls and jewels and the gold sprigs on the lady's dress, the man's jabot and cuffs and silver embroidery, are marvels of prestidigitation, as far as the handling alone is concerned. But it is the freedom of routine and recipe. There is no serious study of drawing below the faces and no serious study of values anywhere. Compared to the workmanship of the great masters this is the handling of a clever journeyman decorator, who has painted the same ornaments a thousand times until he knows exactly how many strokes are necessary to produce his effect, and who never puts in one more than is necessary. He is not concerned with any subtleties of form or tone or color; he is producing with the utmost expedition and the least possible labor what will pass for a satisfactory portrait.

Even in the heads there are evidences of routine—notably the high-lights in the eyes, which are touched in sharply to



PORTRAIT OF DONA MATILDE STOUGHTON DE' JAUDENES Y NEBOT  
WIFE OF THE SPANISH MINISTER TO THE UNITED STATES  
BY  
GILBERT STUART



PORTRAIT OF DON JOSEF DE JAUDENES Y NEBOT,  
THE FIRST SPANISH MINISTER TO THE UNITED STATES  
BY  
GILBERT STUART

give the desirable sparkle which sitters insist upon, without any regard to where they would actually occur. But the heads show also that sense of character and of construction which are absolutely essential to success in portraiture, and that of the lady is distinctly charming. They are evidently likenesses, and what are called, by family friends, "pleasing likenesses," of his sitters. The pictures reveal Stuart as essentially what used to be called a "face painter," and this he became more and more as time went on. The bodies, the hands, the draperies, here treated cavalierly enough, are increasingly neglected until he is tolerably successful in such canvases only as were left untouched after the first sitting, with no impossible bodies to distract the attention from the admirably suggested heads. Never a great artist, he was, for long, the best painter America had produced, and the Museum is to be congratulated on possessing two such important and well preserved examples of his relatively early work, painted before his greatest faults had reached their final stage.

KENYON COX.

#### MUSICIANS' PORTRAITS IN THE CROSBY BROWN COLLECTION

THE exhibit of Musicians' Portraits in the Museum is a most complete and valuable one. It is the gift of Mrs. John Crosby Brown, the donor of the collection of Musical Instruments. There are about four hundred pictures in all, mounted and exhibited in frames, all of which are attached to a central column, thus making them easy of access and consultation. The portraits consist almost entirely of fine engravings, etchings and lithographs. The selection has been made with critical judgment, the idea being to include prints of artistic character as well as musicians of representative character. The collection is the result of painstaking search, the print shops of Europe and America having been diligently explored for the purpose of making it complete. The scope is broad, covering not only com-

posers, instrumentalists, singers and performers of various kinds, but also musical critics, theorists and writers as well as gifted amateurs, music publishers, inventors, etc. A brief analysis of its contents may be interesting as showing of what varied classes it is made up. There are pictures of one hundred and forty-seven composers, eight amateurs or dilettanti, one hundred and thirty-three instrumentalists, eleven musical inventors, instrument makers, and music publishers, fifty-eight singers of both sexes, and eighteen musical critics and theorists. Of the instrumentalists we note the large preponderance of violinists, numbering fifty-five. Next come the pianists, numbering thirty-two. If the collection were made up of performers of the present time, the proportion would probably be reversed. After the pianists come the organists with twenty-two representatives, and then follow six players of the lute, three of the harp, three of the bassoon, three of the flute, three of wind instruments generally, three of the *viola da gamba*, three of the violoncello, and one of the guitar. This list of instrumentalists duplicates, of course, the names of many composers who also excelled as players.

A statement of the nationalities of the musicians may also prove instructive and indicate the relative proportion of musical genius in various countries. Thus, we have one hundred and twenty-four from France, eighty from Germany, thirty from Great Britain, thirteen from Austria, five from Bavaria, four from Belgium and six from Bohemia, one from Holland, four from Hungary, sixty-two from Italy, three from Poland, two from Russia, five from Scandinavia, four from Spain, and one from Switzerland. It is somewhat surprising to find the number of Frenchmen exceeding that of the Germans, and the opinion may be hazarded that this does not portend that France excels Germany in musical talent or skill, but that more of her great artists have been perpetuated in portrait and likeness; and it is, therefore, possible to gather a more complete showing of them in such an assemblage as this.